



The Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital celebrates 30 years of serving the community

This past January 22, Aruba's medical center on the outskirts of Oranjestad quietly celebrated the event of being thirty years in existence by placing a sign above the entrance. Members of the administrative staff and new Director of the Hospital, Arnoud Boesten, announced this week that the official celebration of thirty years of service by the hospital will begin on Wednesday, March 7 and continue through the year with a variety of events.

The history of medical care for Aruban residents began in 1920, with the establishment of the San Pedro di Verona Hospital by the Dominican Order of Dutch Surinam. When the modern Dr. Horacio E. Oduber hospital opened on March 7, 1977, San Pedro di Verona was converted into a public resident care facility for the elderly, which it still is today.

The Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital is named for the island's first Aruban doctor, who used to care for his patients out of his home in Bubali, and this building, called Quinta Del Carmen still exists, well maintained and preserving a bit of Aruban history.

Over the past thirty years, what was at the time a very modern facility has continually upgraded and improved their standard of care, particularly in the last two years. In addition to being a care facility the Horacio E. Oduber Hospital is also an educational institution, and since 1999 has been training nurses and health care professional in several disciplines.

Informing the public of the many services they offer, and in particular the educational and career opportunities offered by the hospital is the thrust of the anniversary celebrations which will be taking place throughout the remainder of the year.

On March 7, the observation of the first day the hospital opened, staff will welcome students from the secondary schools for a tour of the hospital and information about pursuing a career in health care. This will take place from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M. and the Governor of Aruba, Mr. Fredis Refunol will open the morning festivities and tour, during which various local dignitaries and hospital staff are expected to attend. At this time, the official "Day of Horacio Oduber Hospital" will be inaugurated, which has been designated as January 21 from 2008 on, as this is the actual birth date of Dr. Horacio E. Oduber.

Hospital staff will then welcome the public to an "Open House" from 11:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M., which will include informative tours of the facilities, fun activities for children, and food and beverages for sale.

During the rest of the year, the hospital management has planned numerous events involving the hospital staff, including sporting events in May, from which the winners will compete against hospital staff of Curacao and Bonaire.

The hospital also plans a number of educational programs for the public on pressing health concerns that will take place in the entrance hall of the hospital. On Monday of each week informative seminars on Cardio-Vascular Disease, Diabetes, and other pressing topics will be offered, and the public is urged to attend.

During a press conference Ms. Grace Maduro, head of Human Resources detailed the career opportunities available to Aruba's youth in the health care field offered by the hospital through its Beroeps Begeleidende Leertraject program. (BBL) This on-the-job training rewards the participants with a full Dutch certification through associations, hospitals and universities in The Netherlands as a health care technician in various fields, and is recognized around the world. The Dr. Horacio E. Oduber educational department offers certifications in Emergency Care, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Dialysis, Intensive Care, and Coronary Care. The hospital also provides training for specialists in their Oncology Department, and underwrites the cost of sending students to Holland to complete this program.

Hospital management urges the public to join them next Wednesday in not only celebrating thirty years of service, but also to learn about this vital part of the community for health care, education, and career opportunities. Island visitors are also invited to tour the facilities to understand the quality of care, and the high level of training of Aruba's medical professionals.